

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) An apparatus for printing a code on an elongate article passing through a printing station, ~~said article passing through said station~~ in a longitudinal direction, said apparatus comprising:

an ink unit for storing ink to be delivered;

at least one printing head, said printing head being operatively connected to said ink unit, said printing head including at least two valves, said valves being laterally spaced from each other; and

a controller for controlling said ink unit and said at least one printing head, so that said controller is adapted to actuate said valves in order to print a longitudinally oriented code on each at least one lateral surface of said elongate ~~article~~ articles as said ~~article passes~~ articles pass through said printing station, said code being printed at least twice on each of said elongate ~~article~~ articles and said code being unique to each of said elongate articles.

2. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said valves are aligned.

3. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said code includes ten bits.

4. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said each of said printing head includes three valves, so that said code is printed three times.

5. (Currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said apparatus includes two printing heads, a second printing head being oriented to print said code on another lateral surface of said elongate article ~~placed at a 90-degree angle for a first printing head~~.

6. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said ink unit includes at least: an ink reservoir; a head draining valve; a pump; an air draining valve; an ink waste reservoir; and a main valve associated with each of said at least one printing head.

7. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said ink is a UV ink.
8. (Original) A redundant code printed on an elongate article, said code comprising a plurality of elongated bits separated by a predetermined distance, characterized in that said code is printed twice on said elongate article.
9. (Original) A code according to claim 8, wherein each of said codes are parallel to each other.
10. (Original) A code according to claim 8, wherein said code consists of ten bits.
11. (Currently amended) A method for printing a unique redundant code on an elongate article as said elongate article passes through a printing station, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) providing an ink unit;
  - (b) providing at least one printing head, said printing head including at least two valves being laterally spaced from each other;
  - (c) ~~providing a controller operatively associated with said ink unit and said at least one printing head; and~~ providing a controller for controlling said ink unit and said at least one printing head, so that said controller is adapted to actuate said valves in order to print a longitudinally oriented code on each at least one lateral surface of said elongate articles as said articles pass through said printing station, said code being printed at least twice on each of said elongate articles and said code being unique to each of said elongate articles;
  - (d) actuating said valves with said controller in order to print said code.
12. (Original) A method according to claim 11, wherein said at least two valves are aligned.
13. (Original) A method according to claim 12, wherein said valves are actuated substantially simultaneously.